



nileGUIDE

ALL YOU NEED TO PLAN YOUR PERFECT TRIP



3 -Day Relaxing Summer Weekend in Vail

Vail, 3 Days

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Guide Description



AUTHOR NOTE: While Vail is undoubtedly known for its winter reputation, Vail in the summer can be equally enchanting. Great weather, lower prices and endless reaches of natural beauty make the Vail area the perfect summer getaway.

Itinerary Overview

things to do
restaurants
hotels
nightlife

Day 1 - Vail

DAY NOTE: Vail certainly has a variety of lodging options. The Lion Square Lodge is a great location in summer thanks to its prime location in the heart of Vail. Not only are the rooms comfortable and inviting, the lodge has a fantastic restaurant on site. The Vail Marriot mountain Resort is a nice alternative that will save you a few dollars but still but you at the heart of all the fun. If you're on a budget, the Comfort Inn just out of town offers nice rooms at a good price (and the beautiful drive into Vail is short and scenic). If you have a full day on Friday, you'll enjoy exploring the town, including many of the great museums and art galleries. The Colorado Ski Museum and Hall of Fame is always in season and sheds some light on the historical significance of skiing to the Vail area. Dinner at The Red Lion has great meals and will help get you in tune with the Vail vibe.



Colorado Ski Museum - Ski & Snowboard Hall of Fame

Old skis in display cases



Red Lion (The)

Giant portions



Vail Marriott Mountain Resort

Hospitality at the height of perfection



Lion Square Lodge

Great hotel rooms and condos

to sample world class wines, Da Vinci Restaurant has award winning selections.



Blue Tiger

Wide range of dishes



Da Vinci Restaurant

Wine and dine the American way



La Tour

Duck breast and foie gras



Russell's

More than a steakhouse, it's a dining experience



Vail Golf Club

Golf at the feet of the Gore Range



Lion Square Lodge

Great hotel rooms and condos



Vail Marriott Mountain Resort

Hospitality at the height of perfection

Day 2 - Vail

DAY NOTE: There may be no more stunning golf course in America than the Vail Golf Club. Meticulous greens and fairways are in the heart of the Gore Mountain Range--and the thin air will help add a few yards to your drive! Even casual golfers are welcome and the course is especially well-suited for women, with good tee placements and great terrain. If you'd rather flex your fishing rod than your 9-iron, the angling in the area is excellent. Lakota River Guides are one of companies that can show you the hot spots as well as offer guided trips down local rivers and streams. To fill out your day, a visit to the natural splendor of Glenwood Caverns Adventure Park outside of town is worth the drive. Amazing natural cave formations await and guided tours of varying levels of difficulty are available. When it's time to eat, head back into Vail. Nileguide has a complete list of great options for whatever your tastes--a few we recommend are Russell's for steak and seafood, La Tour for reasonably priced French cuisine and Blue Tiger for Asian and other healthy dishes. If you'd prefer

Day 3 - Vail

DAY NOTE: Your last day in Vail can be your most memorable, especially if you start it off with a balloon ride over the mountains. Balloon America, located just down the road in nearby Edwards offers incredible flights high over the mountains. Enjoy a simple ride into the wild blue or spice it up with their romantic balloon package. Once you're on the ground, feel free to hike or explore any of the landscape you just floated over. The Vail Information center can clue you in on hikes of all lengths to round out your day. Complete the relaxing vacation with an authentic alpine meal at the Lancelot Restaurant, where the subdued nightlife and quiet setting is reminiscent of a Swiss mountain restaurant. This 3-day summer getaway is the perfect way to see Vail's charms in the "off-season" and come home relaxed and refreshed.



Lancelot Restaurant

Classic German atmosphere

Day 1 - Vail

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contact:

tel: 970 476 1876

fax: 970 476 1879

<http://www.skimuseum.net>

location:

Vail Transportation Center
Vail CO 81657

hours:

Tu-Su 10a-5p

1 Colorado Ski Museum - Ski & Snowboard Hall of Fame

DESCRIPTION: The Colorado Ski Museum in Vail is a fascinating look at how skiing and snowboarding rose to prominence in Colorado's mountains. Opened in 1976, the Ski Museum showcases a wealth of history that spans over 130 years. Various displays follow the evolution of gear, from early skis to today's modern twin-tips and snowboards, while an impressive photo archive looks at the development of Vail and other ski areas in Colorado. A special exhibit looks at the impact of the 10th Mountain Division, the fabled alpine unit that fought in World War 2. Competitive skiing, from World Cup to Olympic events, is yet another aspect worth checking out while you are in Vail. © NileGuide



wcities

contact:

tel: 970 476 7676

<http://www.theredlion.com/>

location:

304 Bridge Street
Vail CO 81657

2 Red Lion (The)

DESCRIPTION: Most of the menu items at this Vail venue are made from scratch and served in huge portions. The appetizers are what put The Red Lion on the map - with 1" thick onion rings and nachos (beef or chicken) that are almost impossible to finish. The lunch and dinner menus offer Dry Smoked Ribs, Pulled Pork, and a BBQ sauce that is made in-house. Their Red and Green Chili is award-winning. They offer live entertainment, Bingo, and daily drink specials. Be sure to try their signature Lion's Bull! © wcities.com



wcities

contact:

tel: 970 476 4444/ 800 648 0720

fax: 970 476 1647

<http://marriott.com/property/propertypage/WHRCO>

location:

715 West Lionshead Circle
Vail CO 81657

3 Vail Marriott Mountain Resort

DESCRIPTION: Not your ordinary Marriot, this Vail resort has the appearance of a German chateau and all the amenities of a fine ski lodge. Just a short walk away is a gondola to the top of the mountain and plenty of dining and shopping, while in the resort itself there are two restaurants, a spa and a fitness room. As always with the Marriot, both business and leisure travellers will find everything they desire. Call +1 800 648 0720 (Toll free). © wcities.com



wcities

contact:

tel: 970 476 2281

fax: 970 476 7423

<http://www.lionsquare.com/lionsquare/lionsquare.home.asp>

location:

660 W Lionshead Pl

Vail CO 81657

4 **Lion Square Lodge**

DESCRIPTION: With one and two bedroom lodges along with one, two and three bedroom condominiums to choose from during your stay, the Lion Square Lodge caters to all types. Warm furnishings will make you feel at home after a long day of winter or summer activities. Rest your woolen covered feet in front of a fire while sipping a warm drink after a busy of dogsled tours, ice skating, skiing, snowboarding or sleigh rides. If you chose to come in the slower summer months, stretch yourself out by the poolside before you set out on your hike, bike or fishing journey. © wcities.com



Hotels.com

Day 2 - Vail

QUICK NOTE

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contact:
tel: 970 476 1115
fax: 970 476 5022
<http://www.bluetigervail.com>

location:
1310 Westhaven Drive
Vail CO 81657

hours:
Daily 5p-mid

1 Blue Tiger

DESCRIPTION: Blue Tiger offers a wide range of dishes—you can find sushi, Mediterranean & Latin Tapas as well as Chinese, Vietnamese and Thai cuisines with an extensive wine and martini list to choose from. The setting of the restaurant is like an art gallery with colorful paintings hanging on the walls with blue lights illuminating them. The food is very innovative and the menu keeps changing. Sit back, relax and enjoy your meal. And you don't have to worry about it denting your wallet! © wcities.com



Blue Tiger

contact:
tel: 970 477 8050
www.thesebastianvail.com/vail-restaurants-bars/block-16-restaurant

location:
16 Vail Road
Vail CO 81657

2 Da Vinci Restaurant

DESCRIPTION: Da Vinci Restaurant is on par with the standards set by Vail Plaza Hotel & Club. The menu incorporates local American cuisine and seasonal dishes, prepared with utmost care. To go with the delicious food is an extensive wine list from the vineyards in Europe. The decor of the restaurant is classy and chic. It caters to the trendy and elite crowd and is a favorite among the locals. © wcities.com



Da Vinci Restaurant

contact:
tel: 970 476 4403
fax: 970 476 6930
www.latour-vail.com

location:
122 East Meadow Drive
Vail CO 81657

hours:
Mo to Su from 05:00 PM to 09:00 PM

3 La Tour

DESCRIPTION: Welcome to chef and owner Paul Ferzacca's masterpiece - La Tour. Here you can dine on contemporary French cooking and savor the taste of over 350 wines (which have earned the place Wine Spectator's Award of Excellence). Guests can choose between warm or chilled appetizers - try the Duck Breast & Citrus Salad or the Seared Foie Gras. Main courses are as delectable, if not more so: Florida Grouper, Blue Crab-Crusted Salmon, Panko-Crusted Chicken Paillard, and Sauteed Veal Sweatbreads. You wouldn't expect such



wcities

a restaurant to offer a children's menu, but this one does. © wcities.com

contact:
tel: 970 476-6700
www.russellsvail.com

location:
228 Bridge Street
Vail CO 81567

4 Russell's

DESCRIPTION: Russell's is more than a steakhouse, it is a dining experience! Serving certified Angus beef, fresh seafood, shrimp, scampi, weiner schnitzel and Alaskan king crab legs to name a few. A delightful bottle of wine will compliment your dining experience. Enjoy a friendly, relaxing atmosphere with wonderful creekside dining. Come and join us and discover your own reason to visit us again and again. Russell's combines a unique charm with great food that creates an incredible dining experience you will not forget.



Photo courtesy of Russell's

contact:
tel: 970 479 2260
fax: 970 479 2355
http://www.vailgolfclub.net/

location:
1778 Vail Valley Drive
Vail CO 81657

hours:
Daily 4a-8p

5 Vail Golf Club

DESCRIPTION: The Vail Golf Club is an impressive, 8,200 feet high golf course amid the famous Vail Recreation District in the Vail Valley. It is an 18 hole course with lush green stretching to the base of the Gore Range in absolute beauty. Vail Golf Club is a championship course that render all kinds of services including planning, organizing and running the tournament event for its guests. © wcities.com



Photo courtesy of Vail Golf Club

contact:
tel: 970 476 2281
fax: 970 476 7423
http://www.lionsquare.com/lionsquare/lionsquare.home.asp

location:
660 W Lionshead Pl
Vail CO 81657

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Hotels.com

contact:
tel: 970 476 4444/ 800 648 0720
fax: 970 476 1647
http://marriott.com/property/propertypage/WHRCO

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© wcities.com

Day 3 - Vail

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contact:

tel: 970-476-5828

<http://lancelotvail.com/>

location:

201 Gore Creek Drive
Vail CO 81657

hours:

Dinner daily 5:30p-10p



Lancelot Restaurant

DESCRIPTION: The Lancelot Restaurant is a more subdued setting for nightlife with excellent, classic alpine meals.

Vail Snapshot

Local Info

Long before "Dancing with the Stars," there was skiing with the stars in Vail. The resort town set in the Rocky Mountains of Colorado has always boasted of a very high celebrity population. Aside from Hollywood stars, Texas millionaires and sophisticated ladies in ultra-expensive mink coats make their way among the town streets and occasionally hit the slopes. Indeed, the alpine town has glitz and glamour that even Aspen cannot match. Yet, surprisingly, the atmosphere here is authentic, less pretentious and more genuine. Well, when the rich want to play, they certainly let their hair down. And regular mortals tend to follow suit.

Things to Do

Winter sports are, of course, the main attraction in town. With 193 trails, Vail Mountain is one of the nation's premier skiing spots. Lift-ticket prices are on the high end, so make sure you bring enough dough. If you're bringing the kids, the ski school can teach skiers as young as 3 year olds. Alternatively, you can take the children to Adventure Ridge, which features a ski-bike and a snowmobile track. Vail does not close in the summer. Take a hike on Gore Creek Trail, which leads to Gore Lake and the Eagle's Nest Wilderness Area. Rafting the Eagle River in the Vail Valley is another popular summer activity, while cycling the Vail-to-Breckenridge bike path is a good way to get your heart pumping at high altitude. Golfing at Vail Golf Club and, for the more adventurous, paragliding above the Rocky Mountains with Vail Valley Paragliding are also cool summer activities.

Dining

Dining, after skiing, is Vail's favorite sport. The town has more than 100 restaurants, bars and cafes. Lionshead Village has a fair share of restaurants, bistros and cafes. Vail Village also has a number of dining establishments. If you want to escape the hustle of the resort, you can always head to

the towns of Minturn or Edwards about 10 to 20 minutes away from Vail.

Shopping

Whether you want souvenirs to bring home, jewelry, or arts and crafts or sporting goods, there are plenty of boutiques, gift shops and stores in Vail Village and Lionshead Village. Bag and Pack supplies what you need for multiday treks, while Buzz's Ski Shop and the American Ski Exchange have some of the best ski equipment available. If you fancy handcrafted Stetson hats and Lucchese boots, head to Kemo Sabe. Golden Bear is a one-of-a-kind shop that has a line of jewelry featuring the golden bear (the city symbol). Other stores worth checking out are Charm School Boutique, Laughing Monkey and W. Couture.

© NileGuide

History

In the heart of the Rocky Mountains sits Vail, Colorado. Now a bustling winter wonderland filled with lavish chalets and world-class resorts, it is hard to imagine that this city was ever anything other than the country's top ski destination. However, Vail was once home to the Ute Native American tribe, who spent the summer months in the Vail Valley. Gold was discovered in the area in 1859, and soon miners and merchants came pouring in, hoping for a bonanza. By the end of the 19th century, the Ute Indians were displaced, and the land remained in the hands of ranchers and pioneers.

Colorado was declared a U.S. territory two years later in 1861, and as the population grew, the inhabitants of fledgling mountain towns recognized the need for a more centralized authority. Local governments were created to protect property rights and maintain order in the towns, and after an 18-year battle, Colorado gained its statehood in 1876.

The ski tradition has long been present in Colorado, and in the Vail area especially. The first trans-Alpine skiers were mail carriers who traveled to small frontier towns bringing news and letters from the outside world. By 1880, the state had upwards of 50 skiing mail carriers. These men

would travel with only simple equipment, and trekked more than 40 miles at a time to reach their destinations. Soon they became folk-heroes of sorts, and some, like Al Johnson and Father Dryer, are still renowned today for their trekking abilities. The rich competitive future of the area was foreshadowed in an 1886 race, when 25 of these skiers took to the slopes above Crested Butte.

The area remained in this state of relative isolation until 1940, when the Colorado Highway Department completed State Highway 6 (today Interstate 70) from Denver. The Valley was then named after the chief engineer of the project, Charles Vail. During World War II, the U.S. Army's 10th Mountain Division used the area Southeast of Vail, called Camp Hale, for survival training. Some of the men in this elite team recognized the potential this pristine location had to become a world-class ski area. Pete Siebert and Earl Eaton, veterans of the 10th Mountain Division, were the first to begin plans to turn No-Name Mountain, a series of peaks nearby Vail Pass, into ski runs. After returning from the war, they pioneered the creation of Colorado's winter-sport industry. They saw that the very same characteristics that had made Vail a great training ground for the Army would prove to be ideal qualities for a top ski resort.

In 1962 the first resort opened for business and soon large numbers of visitors were flocking to the area, drawn by the soft snow and gentle slopes that set Vail apart from other nearby mountains. Four years later the Town of Vail was incorporated, and construction began to make the downtown as much of an attraction as the ski runs. By the 1970s, it was becoming the most popular ski resort in the country, gaining fame for its sunny slopes, miles of expansive tracks, and its famous vacationers such as President Gerald Ford.

Since that time, the industry has boomed, making Vail the country's top destination for leisure skiers, snowboarders, and Olympic hopefuls alike. The Alpine World Championships were held here in 1989 and 1999, putting the city of Vail on the map for its world-class restaurants, hotels, and spas. In 1996, Vail Resorts Inc. was formed through a series of mergers, allowing skiers to access all of the area's resorts on one

Vail Snapshot continued

ticket. In addition, new runs were opened in 2000, completing the original dream of the valley's ski industry pioneers, Pete Siebert and Earl Eaton.

Photograph provided by Jack Affleck
©

Hotel Insights

Chalet-chic is the style of choice in this alpine town. You may have a hard time finding many accommodations that won't empty your wallet, but with so much luxury extant, it's hardly surprising. After all, what better way to relax after a long day on the slopes than by a warm fireplace to call your own?

Vail

The busy downtown section of Vail Village is home to many shops and restaurants, as well as a bevy of accommodations for those in search of a central location. For a quality stay that has the stamp of time to recommend it, check out The Lodge at Vail, which has retained its pioneering spirit while still modernizing itself for new waves of visitors. Only a short walk away from the major ski lifts, The Sitzmark Lodge offers all of the amenities of a full-service hotel, including its own restaurant, complimentary wine, and full breakfast. If your tastes run to smaller and more private establishments, you'll find a haven at the Savory Inn and Cooking School. Small and intimate, it has an open kitchen that allows guests to chat with the chef and learn some tricks de cuisine before meals. To get away from the flurry of activity in the Village, book a private condo at one of the many hotels out of town, such as the Evergreen Lodge at Vail. The Evergreen Lodge also has its own free shuttle running into town, so you don't have to worry about missing out on Vail's hustle and bustle.

Lionshead

This walkabout neighborhood is full of many high-class dining and shopping options, as well as the only gondola on Vail Mountain. If you want to be within a few steps of the Eagle Bahn Gondola, check out the Vail Marriott Mountain Resort, a charming resort that fits right in to the fashionable neighborhood. Antlers at Vail is a top location for full service condominiums, with a resort that includes a fitness center, business facilities, and saunas.

Avon

Ideally situated on the outskirts of Beaver Creek Resort, this town has a variety of options for visitors. If you enjoy having the complete package available from your doorstep, then the Ritz-Carlton Bachelor Gulch is right up your alley. This resort has the best deals on all sorts of outdoor fun for both the winter and summer seasons. Take a few steps outside in January and hop on the Beaver Creek resort's premiere ski lifts, or try out your swing in July on the area's top-rated golf courses. In the heart of Avon is Nottingham Lake, and the Falcon Point Resort has a variety of condominiums located by its shore. A free shuttle will take you from the comfort of your condo to the ski lifts nearby.

Beaver Creek

This homey neighborhood is a great place to go for a family-oriented trip, and the accommodations here are designed for it as well. The Beaver Creek Lodge is centrally situated and offers rooms for large parties, with full-service suites, a fitness center, and pool. For those who are in search of some leisure time, look no further than Creekside at Beaver Creek which has a fitness area, steam rooms, and outdoor grilling area. The suites also have private kitchens and fireplaces for greater privacy. East West Resorts has a full selection of one to four bedroom houses and town homes that are ideal for catching all the activities Beaver Creek has to offer, as well as being adjacent to major golf courses, white-water rafting depots, and ski runs.

Edwards

Just past Avon and Vail sits Edwards, a town with a great hideaway location for high-end resorts and spas. Luxury is the name of the game at The Lodge & Spa at Cordillera. This complete retreat is a year-round attraction, featuring a world-class golf course, privately owned ski runs, and an opulent spa package that includes pools, saunas, and whirlpool baths.

Eagle

For those who like to experience the outdoors in private, Eagle's Sweetwater Lake is a top choice in greater Vail. There are many open-air activities to experience around Sweetwater Lake, and A.J. Brink Outfitters Sweetwater Lake Resort is your one-stop outfitter for adventures

in horseback riding, hiking, fishing, and boating. They also have a variety of rustic cabins that bring the charm of the old West to modern Colorado.

Photograph provided by Jack Affleck
©

Restaurants Insights

Vail's outdoor offerings span its seasons and geography, from chilly mountains to snow-covered peaks and cool valley springs. Take confidence that in the middle of your adventures, whether you're mountain biking in June or downhill skiing in January, you'll never be too far from a quick bite, an elegant dinner, or a simple drink.

Vail

If you've tried too many fusion or "modern" restaurants and are longing for some traditional American cuisine, you will find a few juicy morsels here in Vail. Cucina Rustica at The Lodge at Vail and Kelly Liken are top-notch restaurants that pride themselves in using fresh, local, and seasonal ingredients to create some of the most spectacular appetizers, entrées and desserts. Another sure bet is Bully Ranch, or if you're in the mood for a picnic make sure you stop at Crossroads Market before you head off on your adventure.

Eager for a romantic night after a long day? You'll find the French food and atmosphere of La Tour quite pleasing. Campo de Fiori is a great place for gourmet Italian cuisine with a warm and inviting environment. Larkspur Restaurant, which is only open during the winter season, will offer you wonderful dishes with great wine and an enchanting view.

For a family-friendly lunch or dinner Chap's Grill & Chophouse is a fun, lighthearted spot with food for everyone. Chili Willy's, is a bit different with its Tex-Mex menu, but nevertheless it makes for a satisfied stomach. If you are looking for something warm during the day then Covered Bridge Coffee will have it for you, along with mid-day pastries, hot chocolate, and of course, coffee.

Lionshead

Despite being totally landlocked, you can still reel in a fresh meal at Montauk Seafood Grill. The menu changes daily to ensure that the best and freshest seafood products

Vail Snapshot continued

are at your disposal. If hearty soul food is more your style, mosey on down to Moe's Original BBQ. With all your favorites like pulled pork sandwiches and ribs, Moe's serves up some of the great down home cooking. The Flying Burrito takes you farther down – south of the border, that is. Here, wrap your hands around these massive meals, filled with all your Mexican favorites.

Avon

Dine alfresco in the summer or by candlelight in the winter with Bivans a great place for the whole family or an intimate night for two. Grouse Mountain Grill offers rustic meals with traditional Colorado surroundings, fresh fish and meat are masterfully grilled and can be served with your choice of wine, providing a great end to a long day in the mountains.

Foods of Vail Home Catering gives you the choice of where you want to eat with its variety of take out options. Or if you're in the mood for high-class, stop in at the Ritz-Carlton Bachelor Gulch and choose from its restaurant, deli or lounge for a lunch break, dinner date or evening cocktail.

Beaver Creek

Atmosphere and food can only be exceeded by the view. Choose Allie's Cabin for stunning views of the mountains and trees while dining with loved ones. Or for a restaurant accessible by sleigh try Beano's Cabin where you'll find spectacular wine, food and décor. The Blue Moose is the perfect place for quick bite, where pies, pizza and a range of Italian favorites make this stop a local favorite. For all those hearty eaters, The Golden Eagle Inn definitely hits the spot. Large portions of steak, seafood, and even some wild game are served, quick, hot, and without the fuss.

Eagle

For some of the best burgers around, check out the Broadway Bar & Grill where big-mouthed Angus creations are standard. Eagle's Grand Avenue Grill is a longstanding favorite offering a variety of comforting creations. For a more sophisticated option, La Scala, presents authentic Italian cuisine, hinted with English favorites in a decadent atmosphere. However, The Wolcott Yacht Club, despite its name, isn't just for the well to do. Here, sample some of the finest breakfast options

in the area, but be sure to check out the hearty fish tacos as well.

4 Eagle Ranch dominates lunchtime for those coming off the slopes. Located in an authentic 19th century cabin, visitors have the choice of taking in the excellent view on the front porch after their hearty meal.

Edwards

Edwards is the place to be for all your Mexican cravings. Fiesta's Cafe & Cantina reserves only the freshest and finest ingredients, creating an array of enchiladas, tacos, and various vegetarian options as well. For a taste of pop culture, visit Moe's Southwest Grill. Despite the gigantic bowls of guacamole and sizzling fajitas, all of the wall decorations are references to movie cult classics. Maybe you're just in the area for a drink and a snack. If so, Gore Range Brewery and its famous microbrewery have a huge list of pub-style fair with not much flair.

The wine list at Charrapal is sure to please even the most selective of consumers. Located in the Cordillera Lodge & Spa, its full of a vast array of regional menu options cradled by natural architecture.

Photograph provided by Jack Affleck

©

Nightlife Insights

Vail is an outdoor enthusiasts' dreamland. If you were to doze off and have visions of a place where skiing, fishing and hiking were daily priorities, you would have a picture of Vail in your head. The mountain village is absolutely overflowing with fresh air activities that will have you gleefully gasping for another breath.

Skiing and Snowboarding

During the winter months there is no comparison to the dry powder that the Ski gods bestow upon the Vail mountaintops. And for those months when the weather is frosty, there is no skier-friendly place you'd rather be than the Vail Valley.

Normally towards the end of November and beginning of December, you'll start to see the lift lines forming as the mountains of the Vail Valley come alive with skiers and snowboarders carving down the slopes. The numerous ski resorts that surround the mountain town, such as the Vail Marriott Mountain Resort, begin to fill up during the

snow season, and for good reason. Along with the fantastic slope conditions comes the ski contests and mountain competitions.

The American Ski Classic takes place every March and turns the Vail mountains into celebrity slopes. Don't be surprised if you see such skiing legends as Billy Kid and Franz Klamer, or if you bump into some ski-enthusiast stars like Kelsey Grammer and Gloria Estefan.

If you're a snowboarder who isn't really excited by "two-planking" festivities, then you should check out The Session, a snowboard competition and party on the mountain. Today's top riders busting out high-flying tricks mixed among live music and good times make this one of those must-see Vail mountain events.

Music & Film Festivals

One of the ways that the Vail Valley kicks off its winter ski season is to throw a party that gives everyone an idea of what kind of town Vail is. This pre-season get-down is known as Snow Daze, and has been bringing headlining musicians, street parties, on-snow events, great food, good times and a festive atmosphere to the mountain.

Despite Vail being synonymous with skiing and snow, it also has a cultured art side to it as well. Each year, visitors and locals alike take part in the many festivals that celebrate music, dance and film. After hitting the world-class slopes, warm up with some sizzling tunes at the Vail Jazz Festival. Classical music lovers will also have their musical heart strings plucked when the Bravo! Music Festival rolls into Vail for six weeks of open-air concerts.

What's music without dancing? Every year the Vail International Dance Festival twirls its way into the area for several weeks of classic and contemporary performances by well-known dance ensembles, such as the Paris Opera Ballet and Dance Cuba!

Need to give your ears and legs a rest after all that skiing, live music and dancing? Well, sit back and relax at the Vail Film Festival. This four-day event incorporates feature films, shorts, documentaries, and student films. Don't worry about missing any slope-time either. The screenings are planned for the late afternoon and evenings so that you won't miss a second of the snow.

Vail Snapshot continued

If you planned your trip to Vail around the month of October, you'll be there for the right month to drink, sing and be merry, as Vail hosts their own Oktoberfest extravaganza.

Art Galleries& Museums

The Vail Village has some great little galleries and museums to entertain its visitors when they are not on the ski slopes. The Cogswell Gallery offers artwork that truly reflects the nature of Colorado, with wildlife sculptures and rustic antique furnishings. You'll find nature inspired hand-made jewelry at the J. Cotter Gallery where just about every piece of jewelry will remind you of Vail's beauty.

Vail is a ski town, and therefore what better place to find the Colorado Ski Museum. Take a walk through the hallways of this museum and see how the Vail Valley transformed from its mere beginnings as a sheep farm to the ski Mecca it is today.

Other Outdoor Activities

Don't think that because this region of Colorado was blessed with perfect ski conditions that there is only wintertime fun in Vail. Even when the snow melts in Vail, the smiles don't, and the warm sunny days bring out some of the best, with activities ranging from river-rafting to golf. There are plenty of things to see and do around Vail, as it is truly a four-season town.

There are a number of skilled tour guides in Vail that can show you the true meaning of the great outdoors. No matter what your skill level or experience, Lakota River Guides will take you on a river rafting trip that will meet your desired level of adrenaline pumping excitement. If you're looking for more than just a rafting adventure, make a stop at Nova Guides. The guides at Nova will take you on some unforgettable excursions that can include dog sledding, snowmobiling, river fishing, Jeeping or tearing up some terrain on an ATV.

Vail is also home to world-class golf links that include the Cotton Ranch Golf Club, and the Eagle Ranch Golf Club.

When the snow starts to melt in the spring, the rivers around Vail begin to rise in water height and the fly-fishing is at its best. Pack your waders and head out to the many local

streams and rivers that are full of those elusive trout that you "almost caught".

Photograph provided by Jack Affleck ©

Things to Do Insights

The winter months see the most excitement in this bustling ski town. Many visitors head directly to the slopes as soon as they reach Vail, as its resorts boast some of the best runs in the country. But before hitting the powder covered trails, stop and spend a bit of time wandering some of the city's districts.

Colorado Ski Museum In downtown Vail, visit the Cogswell Gallery and the Colorado Ski Museum. Nearby is the Gerald R. Ford Amphitheater and the Betty Ford Alpine Gardens. Dine at the contemporary French restaurant Left Bank.

Nottingham Lake Have breakfast at Loaded Joe's, then get close to nature at the Gore Range Nature Discovery Center and Nottingham Lake. Finish the day with a divine meal at Allie's Cabin.

Vail Recreation District Also in Vail is the Vail Symposium, which focuses on community education. Grab lunch at Cucina Rustica. The Vail Recreation District contains the Vail Golf Club, the Vail Nature Center and the Vail Tennis Center, if you're looking to relax.

Vail Nordic Center A trip to Adventure Ridge is popular among families with children. Browse the collection at the Claggett/Rey Gallery or Pismo Gallery, then grab a bite to eat at the Wildflower. Ski aficionados will love the Vail Nordic Center.

Imagination Station Browse the displays at the J. Cotter Gallery, then go to the Imagination Station, which offers hands-on learning experiences. Do some skating at the Dobson Ice Arena, then dine at the Bully Ranch or the Larkspur Restaurant.

There are many ways to see Vail, from riding in a balloon to white water rafting.

Balloon Tours Balloon America(+1 970 468 2473/http://www.balloonridesusa.com/) Camelot Balloons(+1 800 785 4743/http://www.camelotballoons.com/)

Adventure Tours Arkansas Valley Adventure(+1 800 370 0581/http://www.coloradorafting.net/) Beaver

Divers(+1 970 949 1012/http://www.beaverdivers.com/)

Rafting Tours Colorado River Guides, Inc.(+1 800 938 7238/http://www.raftcolorado.com/) Lakota River Guides(+1 970 845 7238/http://www.lakotariver.com/) Piney River Adventures(+1 970 477 1171/http://www.pineyriveranch.com/)

Fishing Tours Gorsuch Outfitters Fly Fishing(+1 970 926 0900/http://www.gorsuch-outfitters.com/)

Cemetery Tours Evergreen Cemetery Tour(+1 970 486 3900)

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Travel Tips

Getting There

By Air

Vail/Eagle County Airport(<http://snow.com/flyvail/>) is a small hub located about 35 miles West of Vail. The Vail/Eagle County Airport has different schedule for winter and summer, with select major carriers that include:

Continental(+1 800 523 3273/ <http://www.continental.com>)

Delta(+1 800 221 1212/ <http://www.delta.com>) American Airlines(+1 800 433 7300/ <http://www.aa.com>) Northwest(+1 800 225 2525/ <http://www.nwa.com>) United Airlines(+1 800 864 8331/ <http://www.ual.com>)

Taxi& Other Ground Transportation

Vail Valley Transportation(+1 877 829 8294) Airlink Shuttle(+1 800 554 8245) Vail Valley Taxi(+1 877 829 8294/ +1 970 476 8294) Vail Coach(+1 877 554 7433/ <http://www.vailcoach.com>) Colorado Mountain Express(+1 800 525 6363/+1 970 926 9800/ <http://www.ridecme.com/>) Vail Transportation Service(+1 800 480 9104/ <http://www.vailtransportation.com>)

Denver International Airport(DIA)(+1 303 342 2000/ <http://www.flydenver.com/>) is one of the largest and busiest airports in the world. The Denver International Airport is located 110 miles East of Vail. Airline providers include:

Frontier(+1 800 432 1359/ <http://www.frontierairlines.com>) Continental(+1 800 523 3273/ <http://www.continental.com>)

Vail Snapshot continued

jetBlue(+1 800 538 2583/ <http://www.jetblue.com>) US Airways(+1 800 428 4322/ <http://www.usairways.com>) Delta(+1 800 221 1212/ <http://www.delta.com>) American Airlines(+1 800 433 7300/ <http://www.aa.com>) United Airlines(+1 800 864 8331/ <http://www.ual.com>) Northwest/KLM(+1 800 225 2525/ <http://www.nwa.com>) Air Canada(+1 888 247 2262/ <http://www.aircanada.com>) British Airways(+1 800 403 0882/ <http://www.britishairways.com>) Lufthansa(+1 800 645 3880/ <http://cms.lufthansa.com>)

Taxi& Other Ground Transportation

Shuttle Services include:

Super Shuttle(+1 800 525 3177/ +1 303 370 1300/ <http://www.supershuttledenver.com>)

BlueSky(+1 303 300 2626/ <http://www.blueskyshuttle.net>)

Colorado Mountain Express(+1 800 525 6363/ +1 970 926 9800/ <http://www.ridecme.com/>)

Taxis are readily available outside of the airport.

By Car

Vail is centrally located in the Rocky Mountains and easily accessible by car. The city of Vail is just 35 miles East of Eagle, and 100 miles West of Denver. Besides being the major road you would take into Vail from Denver and other surrounding cities, I-70(with the help of

the Colorado countryside) is an extremely beautiful drive. Once in Vail, there will be signs for the major exits leading to lodging and other accommodations.

Getting Around Vail

You would have an easier time finding a snowball in July than you would a parking spot in Vail. Much of the city is self-contained making parking almost impossible and very expensive if you do find it. There is however, a very reliable and free bus system that provides service throughout east and west Vail Valley(+1 970 479 2358).

The Eagle Bahn Gondola(+1 970 476 9090) is one of the most comfortable and convenient ways to make your way up Vail Mountain. It is open both winter and summer, and takes you directly to some of the best ski areas and summer hiking trails.

If traveling overseas, take the safety precaution of registering your trip at <https://travelregistration.state.gov> and for helpful, practical advice about traveling technicalities and safety standards check out <http://travel.state.gov/>.

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Fun Facts

Vail

State: Colorado

Country: United States

Vail by the Numbers

Population: 4531

Elevation: 8150 ft

Average Annual Rainfall: 10 inches/ 84 centimeters

Average January Temperature: 45 degrees F/ 7 degrees C

Average July Temperature: 75 degrees F/ 25 degrees C

Quick Facts:

Major Industries: Tourism, Outdoor Recreation

Ethnicity: 94.13% White, 0.29% African American, 0.49% Native American, 1.66% Asian, 6.2% Hispanic, 0.09% Pacific Islander, 1.43% Other

Electricity: 220 volts AC, 50 Hz, standard two or three pin plugs

Time Zone: GMT-6

Country Dialing Code:+1

Area Code: 970

Did You Know?

The mountains surrounding the valley are not owned privately, but rather are public land rented to the ski resorts.

Orientation: Situated in Eagle County, CO, Vail is bisected by Gore Creek, and is surrounded by the White River National Forest.

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